FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MAY 10, 2007

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NASHVILLE MEDICAL NEWS HONORS TENNCARE'S CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

DR. WENDY LONG IS ONE OF ITS "10 WOMEN TO WATCH" IN MEDICINE

NASHVILLE – Nashville Medical News has selected Dr. Wendy Long, TennCare's chief medical officer, as one of its "10 Women to Watch" in its May 2007 edition. The monthly magazine's annual feature celebrates outstanding local medical professionals.

"I consider myself extremely fortunate to be in a position where I can contribute to improved health outcomes for Tennessee's most vulnerable citizens. It's an honor to be recognized by Nashville Medical News and a privilege to be in the company of such an outstanding group of women," she says. The article highlights how Dr. Long's interest in solving large-scale medical problems led her to pursue population-based medicine as a career.

When she was working in the hospital as a med student, Dr. Long noticed children and pregnant women reporting to the emergency room without the benefit of routine pediatric and prenatal care. She wondered what systemic changes could be made to prevent such situations. That interest landed her at the Department of Health and TennCare in successive positions that enabled her to address many of the complex healthcare issues facing the state.

In addition to her work in the area of maternal and child health, in 1997 she received an award from the federal government for her role in establishing a system of care, funded through a three-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, that connected HIV patients with expert healthcare providers across the state. TennCare has benefitted from her expertise, as well. "Her skills have been vital to our operations. And, her work to help TennCare enrollees make better health decisions – to help prevent the onset of debilitating and expensive diseases – is crucial to our strategy to devote more resources to preventive care," said TennCare Director Darin Gordon.

Also honored are educators, other public health leaders and private physicians. The issue hit newsstands this week.

TennCare is Tennessee's managed-care Medicaid program serving approximately 1.2 million low-income children, pregnant women and disabled Tennesseans, with an annual budget of \$7 billion.

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